



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 108th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 149

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2003

No. 106

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 17, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JUDY BIGGERT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, victory for Your people and guardian of all Your people, be present to leaders in government as we pray to You this day. Sacred history reveals Your servant Joshua as a great conqueror who secures and apportions the land of promise, so Your people live in peace. All the deeds of Joshua had been foretold to Moses.

When we look over the history of this Nation from our revolutionary days, through world wars and even to more recent conflicts, we are amazed by the promise of peace and the surprise of new relationships. Time and time again those who were defeated have become our friends. With Joshua, America realizes that true victory and lasting peace are Your gift, as is friendship, born out of obedience to Your law and trust in Divine Providence.

Reflecting on our history today gives us hope for tomorrow. We praise You and thank You that out of conflict You can create great allies. You are always at work changing human hearts and reconciling people. This we know now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. SOLIS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 2330. An act to sanction the ruling Burmese military junta, to strengthen Burma's democratic forces and support and recognize the National League of Democracy as the legitimate representative of the Burmese people, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 236. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the Rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to commemorate the unveiling of the statue of Sakakawea provided by the State of North Dakota for display in Statuary Hall.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 555. An act to establish the Native American Health and Wellness Foundation, and for other purposes.

S. 558. An act to elevate the position of Director of the Indian Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services to Assistant Secretary for Indian Health, and for other purposes.

S. 570. An act to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 with respect to the qualifications of foreign schools.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 96-388, as amended by Public Law 97-84 and Public Law 106-292, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, appoints the following Senators to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council for the One Hundred Eighth Congress:

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID).
The Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER).

The message also announced that pursuant to section 2761 of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, appoints the Honorable JUDD GREGG of New Hampshire and the Honorable JOHN CORNYN of Texas as delegates of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group conference during the One Hundred Eighth Congress.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 5 one-minute speeches per side.

HOLD CASTRO ACCOUNTABLE AT THE HAGUE

(Mr. SMITH of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, Cuban political prisoners never have a nice day, so I rise today to remind my colleagues as we meet here in session, more than 400 of Cuba's best, brightest and bravest are suffering unspeakable cruelty at the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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hands of Fidel Castro and his thugs. The dictator's latest sweep, begun in March, has jailed more than 75 independent journalists and human rights activists.

Afraid and fearful, Castro has now moved to silence all dissent. Castro is a weak and insecure man, utterly afraid to be criticized or held to account. Yet some in Congress still do not get it. They imagine Castro is a man we can do business with. Instead, Castro and his psychotic torturers ought to be at The Hague facing prosecution for crimes against humanity.

Madam Speaker, Castro is a mass murderer, a cruel torturer, and anything but a benign revolutionary.

NATIONAL DEBT INCREASES UNDER PRESIDENT BUSH

(Mr. TANNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, it has been 797 days since President Bush and the Republican Party embarked on their economic plan for our country. During that time, the national debt has increased by \$1,080,045,794,469. According to the Web site for the Bureau of the Public Debt at the U.S. Department of Treasury, yesterday at 4:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, the Nation's outstanding debt was \$6,720,371,180,827. Furthermore, in fiscal year 2003, interest on our national debt or the "debt tax" is \$277,768,492,816 through June 30.

TSA AWARDED PORKER OF THE WEEK AWARD

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Madam Speaker, the Transportation Security Administration is only a year old but is already wasting funds like an old-time Federal bureaucracy. The agency that is responsible for staffing the Nation's airports with security personnel is also responsible for nearly \$250 million of waste.

Given the new and enormous task of securing 429 airports around the country, there is bound to be some financial waste. But the extent of the TSA's largess is indefensible. It has overstaffed rural airports, paid security companies inflated rates, purchased more than a thousand baggage scanners with dated technology for a million dollars apiece, leased sport utility vehicles for \$200,000 a year rather than lease less-expensive sedans, and entered into a contract to recruit Federal screeners that escalated from the original estimate of \$100 million to nearly \$700 million, all of this on top of last year's \$410,000 expense just to furnish the offices of the director and his chief aides.

Madam Speaker, the TSA gets my Porker of the Week Award.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMY

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to address an issue very important to millions and millions of people in our country. President Bush has ignored our economy, and I point out to Members to look at what is happening in the 32nd Congressional District of California. Rates of unemployment have gone up dramatically. The national rate is about 6.4, and in one of my cities it is up to almost 11 percent.

What I think we ought to be doing in the House is starting to focus in on trying to replenish jobs and bringing back American values that our families so sorely need. We have many people serving as reservists in the military. Their families are suffering. We need to give them a child tax credit break, and we need to increase the minimum wage.

Madam Speaker, these are hard-working people. They have been suffering for over 2 years, and I know they are telling me in a strong way across the country that we need to focus on our economy. The rich have gotten their tax breaks, but what about the working poor? And what about the working-class families that we all represent in our districts? I would ask my colleagues to think seriously before we go on recess to provide an economic incentive package to help working families.

IRAQ'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, it became apparent that the United States needed to be more vigilant about terrorism and weapons proliferation and pay attention to prospects of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of groups that could use them against American interests.

The Bush Administration, the Clinton Administration, and the United Nations all agreed that Saddam Hussein possessed a significant biological and chemical capability in 1998 when the inspectors were withdrawn. There is broad agreement that Hussein, different from any other leader, had proven himself capable of using these weapons for offensive purposes and not merely a defensive posture.

There are efforts in the Congress to employ a full investigation into difficult issues to understand whether mistakes were made and to take action to fix them in fulfillment of Congress' important oversight responsibilities. To date, the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, the Senate

Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence reject a broader probe of the WMD issue.

I believe Congress is exercising its oversight authority and has set in place procedures to review comprehensively and on a bipartisan basis the intelligence surrounding Iraq prior to the outbreak of war and to take into account any dissident views on the Iraqi threat.

GUERRILLA WARFARE IN IRAQ

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, since President Bush declared the end to major combat operations on May 1, 2003, our brave servicemen and women have continued to die in Iraq at a rate of one per day. Let us look at the figures: 412 wounded, 86 killed. And still the administration continues to downplay the gravity of this situation.

Our troops are facing insurgents who are clearly using guerrilla techniques and tactics; and even the new CENTCOM commander yesterday admitted that, in his opinion, this is a classic guerrilla-type war.

So why is it that the Secretary of Defense and the President are refusing to characterize it as such? We are starting down a slippery slope into another long, drawn-out guerrilla conflict, once again.

We need to find a viable solution fast. It is imperative that we give our troops all of the resources that they need to get the job done and confront the enemy, and we must continue to urge NATO to provide emergency assistance. We must bring our troops home as quickly as possible.

NORTH KOREAN REFUGEE CRISIS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, the actions of China and the UNHCR, in response to the North Korean refugee crisis, are reprehensible. China has deliberately failed to uphold the obligations under international law and the conventions that they have signed and has prohibited the UNHCR from carrying out its accepted mandates to assist refugees.

The Chinese government has prevented North Korean refugees from their right to apply for asylum. Any North Koreans who have tried to do this have disappeared, and the UNHCR has failed in its mandate to invoke binding arbitration against countries that prohibit it from carrying out its mandate.

Chinese officials fear a refugee flood, but refugees do not flee their country simply to find refugee assistance, they